

Congresswoman McCollum,

Thank you for hosting the TCAAP Issues meeting last evening in Arden Hills. I am pleased you are willing to take a leadership role in reformulating a vision for this space as plans evolve for merging the area back into use by area communities.

As a member of the Minnesota Horse Council Board of Directors, I would ask that you and the TCAAP Planning Task Force give serious consideration to using a portion of the area as green space for an Equestrian Center. States like North Carolina, Kentucky, New Jersey, and Michigan have done economic studies to document the value of the Equine Industry in their state and the value of State Equestrian Center as a focal point for Equestrian activity.

The Minnesota Horse Council has been a National leader in providing matching grant funding to the MN DNR for trail development and enhancements in Minnesota's State Parks and Forests. Annually we provide up to 12 -- \$3000 scholarships to people committed to an education serving the Horse Industry. We were the FIRST state to provide funding to non-profits and economically challenges horse owners to neuter stallions as part of our Unwanted Horse Program. We require owners to participate in an equine educational program developed by the AAEP (2004) as part of our Unwanted Horse Program.

As issues and questions come up regarding horses and agricultural issues affecting the horse industry, please contact myself or one the the MHC Board members for advice or input ([www.mnhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mnhorsecouncil.org)).

In closing, those of us involved in the horse industry would appreciate your consideration as plans evolve for the TCAAP area.

Best regards,  
Thomas T.